

O 291627Z OCT 07 ZFF4
FM AMEMBASSY BAKU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4124
INFO CDR USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE
MCESC QUANTICO VA IMMEDIATE
MCESC REGION 1 AMCONGEN FRANKFURT GE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T BAKU 001296

SIPDIS

NOFORN

DEPARTMENT FOR D, P, M, INR, DS/IP/EUR, DS/ICI/PII,
DS/DSS/ITA, EUR/CARC, S/CT, CA
FRANFURT FOR MCESC REGION 1

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/29/2027

TAGS: AJ ASEC CASC PTER

SUBJECT: AZERBAIJAN - BAKU EAC MEETING 10/29/07

REF: BAKU 1294

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission - Donald Lu for reasons 1.4 (B,C ,D)

¶1. (S/NF) Ambassador convened a meeting of EAC members (AMB, DCM, CON, DAO, GRPO, MGMT, MSG, PD, POL/ECON, RSO,) on October 29, 2007 at 1715 hours (local) to discuss the Embassy's security posture in response to information received from the GOAJ Ministry of National Security (MNS) regarding a threat specific to the U.S. Embassy. The threat is from members of an Azerbaijani Wahabists terror group headed by an Azerbaijani military officer who disappeared from a base in western Azerbaijan recently with one heavy machine gun, five AK-47 rifles, several thousand rounds of ammunition and approximately 50 hand grenades. Over the last 72 hours, Azerbaijani MNS and Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) Special Forces troops have conducted several raids in the Baku area which have netted six arrested, one killed and several weapons recovered. Per the MNS, the group had specific plans to attack the U.S. Embassy with automatic weapons and hand grenades. At present, three of the group, including its leader, are at large and presumed to be well armed and equipped.

¶2. (S/NF) The EAC identified several factors for assessing the threat as continuing to be serious: At least three known terrorists are still at large and GOAJ authorities have little information as to their likely whereabouts. A significant amount of weapons remains unaccounted for. MNS has told the Embassy that based on information obtained from the detainees, the group was in the final stages of planning an attack on the Embassy and "only planned one more meeting" before the attack. The members of the group are ethnic Azeris and Baku residents who blend well into the surroundings and know the operating environment, according to MNS. And finally, when the terrorist cell was first raided by police, the group fought back, resulting in the death of one of the members.

¶3. (S/NF) The EAC was briefed by GRPO and RSO on the status of GOAJ operations and countermeasures undertaken in response to the threat. GRPO briefed that no significant additional actions had occurred overnight, but that the MNS was continuing its investigation and had determined that this terrorist group had possible links to other terror groups within Azerbaijan and international terrorist organizations. See GRPO situation report TD 314/71918-07

¶4. (SBU) RSO reviewed defensive measures currently in place including limited operations with all public services being suspended except emergency ACS as needed and only Embassy management and core staff working on the threat issue and essential functions working at the Chancery; the Chancery compound is operational, but the unclassified Embassy Annex

located in an office building in downtown Baku is only staffed by Embassy LGF; all Embassy staff and TDY visitors have been briefed via phone tree and SMS messaging; there are increased LGF staff levels at the Chancery, Annex, CMR and DCMR with an additional two Mobile Patrol units fielded bringing the number to four; additional host nation police assets from the Ministry of Internal Affairs Diplomatic Protection Battalion are on station at the Chancery, Annex and CMR as well as the two international schools; SD operations have been increased by going to 24 hour coverage with emphasis on the Chancery, Annex, CMR and the two international schools. The EAC also discussed ideas to safeguard soft targets in the community and decided to recommend that the police assign resources to cover two church services frequented by Embassy personnel.

¶15. (SBU) The EAC decided that the Embassy would continue limited operations for Tuesday, October 29th. A revised warden message indicating the continuation of the limited operations will be issued.

¶14. (SBU) Additional resources in the form of DS Mobile Security Division (MSD) will be coordinated with DS via the RSO.

DERSE